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MILTON AND ROGER WILLIAMS.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.

SIRS :—Has anybody called attention to the following passage in Dr. Edmund J. Carpenter's "Roger Williams" (Grafton Press, N. Y., [1909], p. 201)? The italics are mine :

"In a letter to John Winthrop, written after Williams's return to New England, in the summer of 1654, the latter wrote : 'The Secretary of the Council (Mr. Milton) for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages.' From this passage it may be inferred that Williams, having naturally formed the acquaintance of the Council's secretary, and *being familiar with the Dutch language, translated for Milton the treatise of Salmasius.*"

By "the treatise of Salmasius" Dr. Carpenter means what he himself calls "a defence of Charles I" by "Salmasius, a Dutch professor." I pass over the fact that Milton's reply to Salmasius was finished before Roger Williams reached London. The really interesting thing is Dr. Carpenter's discovery that to read Salmasius's *Defensio Regia* requires an acquaintance with the Dutch language.

G. L. KITTREDGE.

THE TIME OF NOON.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.

SIRS :—The first definition of the word *noon* in the *New English Dictionary* is the following, marked obsolete : 'The ninth hour of the day, reckoned from sunrise according to the Roman method, or about three o'clock in the afternoon.' The examples of the use of the word in this sense are taken, for the most part, from accounts of the crucifixion, and the last one given is dated c. 1420. The use of *noon* in its present sense, according to this same authority, dates from the fourteenth century. The earlier sense of the word seems, however, to survive in a curious use of the compound *forenoon* in a letter written by Hume during the time when he was Under-Secretary of State in London, between 1767 and 1769. He writes : 'I have all the forenoon in the Secretary's house, from ten till three, when there ar-

rive from time to time messengers that bring me all the secrets of the kingdom, and, indeed, of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.' (Quoted by Huxley in his essays : *Hume, with Helps to the Study of Berkeley*, London, 1894, p. 43.) And a similar usage appears in the following passage : 'Theocles was now resolv'd to take his leave of the *Sublime* : the Morning being spent, and the Forenoon by this time well advanced.' (Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, 1732, 2. 391.)

Such instances may perhaps show that the earlier thought as to the time of noon persisted later than the fifteenth century.

ELIZABETH MERRILL.

Yale University.

CHANTECLER.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.

SIRS :—In connection with Mr. J. M. Clapp's note of February 17 in the *Nation* on "Rostand and Tom D'Urfey," the lyric drama, "*La Forêt mouillée*," of Hugo may be interesting. It was written in 1854 and published in his "*Théâtre en liberté*" in 1886 (Hetzel-Quantin).

Like Rostand in "*Chantecler*," Hugo uses animals and birds as characters, and in addition gives the power of speech to trees, flowers, clouds, drops of rain and even pebbles. They talk a humorous and picturesque language which offers much analogy to that of Rostand.

For example, compare Chantecler's description of the "*moineau de Paris*," in the third act, with what the "*moineau*" himself says to the "*paon*," in the "*Forêt mouillée*" :

Je suis gamin ; autrefois, j'étais page.
Je m'ébats, cher seigneur. Si je n'étais voyou,
Je voudrais être rose et dire : I love you.
Je suis l'oiseau gaité, rapin de l'astre joie.
A nous deux nous faisons le printemps, etc.

M. S. GARVER.

Yale University.

GUILLAUME DE DEGUILEVILLE AND THE
Roman de la Rose.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.

SIRS :—In his study of the fourteenth century French poet, Guillaume de Deguileville, Hultman